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ABSTRACT

The Secondary Level English Proficiency (SLEP) test is a measure of ability in understanding spoken and written English. It is designed for use with students entering grades 7 through 12 whose native language is other than English. Previously offered on a limited basis at test centers established by the Educational Testing Service, the SLEP is now available to secondary schools and community colleges worldwide. Results can be useful in making placement decisions about the following: (1) assignment to English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes; (2) placement in a mainstream English-medium program; (3) exemption from a bilingual program; and (4) exit from an ESL program. The SLEP is a norm-referenced test with 150 multiple-choice questions. This guide describes the test, its purposes and uses, scoring, and details of administration. Sample questions are provided illustrating listening comprehension and reading comprehension (including grammar and vocabulary) portions of the test. Test ordering information is included, with an order form. (SLD)

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SECONDARY LEVEL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST

US/OVERSEAS Edition

- ✓ for grades 7-12
- ✓ individual or group administration
- ✓ three parallel forms
- ✓ two sections
  - listening comprehension
  - reading comprehension, including grammar and vocabulary
- ✓ local scoring

SLEP

TM017606

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SLEP is sponsored by the Test of English as a Foreign Language program

ETS Language Programs
Secondary Level English Proficiency Test
P.O. Box 6155
Princeton, NJ 08541-6155
USA
(609) 243-8243 or 243-8244

Educational Testing Service (ETS) is a sponsor of the SLEP test and administers it within the Test of English as a Foreign Language program, which is under the direction of a policy council that was established by, and is affiliated with, the College Board and the Graduate Record Examinations Board.

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Secondary Level English Proficiency Test

The SLEP® (Secondary Level English Proficiency) test is a measure of ability in two primary areas: understanding spoken English and understanding written English. It is designed for use with students entering grades seven through twelve whose native language is other than English.

Previously offered on a limited basis at test centers established by Educational Testing Service (ETS®), SLEP is now available to secondary schools and community colleges worldwide. This program enables schools to purchase the test, administer it to their own applicants and students, and score it locally.

Purpose and Use of the Test

A basic assumption underlying the SLEP test is that language ability is a critical factor in determining the degree to which secondary students can benefit from instruction: to succeed, they must be able to understand what is being said (by both teachers and fellow students) and to understand both formal and informal material written in English. SLEP is not an aptitude test or a measure of academic achievement; nor can it provide information about the various social and psychological factors that — along with language ability — must be considered in making admissions and placement decisions. However, the results of the test can be very helpful in making placement decisions related to the following:

- ✓ assignment to English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classes
- ✓ placement in a mainstream English-medium program
- ✓ exemption from a bilingual program
- ✓ exit from an ESL program

Because schools using the SLEP test can administer the test when they choose and have the results immediately, such placement decisions can be made easily at any time of the year. Also, since the SLEP scale is sensitive to small gains in language skills, the test is useful for program evaluation purposes.

Development and Description

SLEP is a norm-referenced test containing 150 multiple-choice questions of eight different types. As a norm-referenced test, it provides users with the opportunity to compare student results with those of other students in similar

situations. Interpretive data provided with the test materials permit comparisons by categories such as age, grade, and language background (also see "Technical Data" on page 5).

The multiple-choice format was chosen primarily to ensure reliability of results through standardization of administrations and to eliminate reliance on the subjective judgments of raters.

The SLEP test was developed by staff at Educational Testing Service with the assistance and cooperation of a committee of examiners composed of secondary school teachers of English as a second language. The first task in designing the test was to select the overall specifications and types of questions to be used. Of the many types considered, eight were chosen, four for each section of the test.

The four types of questions selected for Section 1 of the test all use recorded samples of spoken English to test listening comprehension and do not rely heavily on written material. Two of them use no written material at all. The four types of questions in Section 2, which measures vocabulary, grammar, and overall reading comprehension, are based on written or visual materials. (Descriptions and samples of the eight types of questions are on pages 7-17.)

The choice of material for the SLEP test was based on an analysis of actual materials designed for use in grades 7-12. When choosing the context for some questions, particularly the conversations used in the listening comprehension section, every effort was—and is—made to use situations typical of those encountered by students in American secondary schools.

A total of almost 1,500 questions were written and reviewed by ETS test development staff and the secondary school ESL specialists. Prior to final assembly of the test, the questions were extensively pretested. Various combinations of questions were administered to more than 6,000 secondary school students in the United States and a number of foreign countries. (The majority of those tested abroad had studied English as a school subject for at least one year.) Only those questions meeting rigid requirements for levels of difficulty and discrimination were accepted for use in final editions of the test.

Experience with SLEP

SLEP was administered twice in 1980 at test centers throughout the world, with data from these administrations providing initial information about the statistical characteristics of the test. To gather data specifically about limited English speakers, the test was also administered to almost 2,000 students at more than 50 secondary schools in the United States during the 1980-81 school year. By combining test data with information about individual student characteristics, norms were established for separate categories of students. Thus, it is possible to use the test results to determine how the performance of individual students on each section of the test compares with that of students with similar characteristics. Complete information about interpreting SLEP results is included in the manual that accompanies the test materials.

Technical Data

The special data-collection project described above and the resulting norms provide basic support for the validity of the SLEP test. Analyses from these administrations have yielded separate norms for students who have been enrolled in ESL, bilingual, or mainstream classes. Other analyses from this project have confirmed that the test discriminates among students based on the length of time they have studied English. Those who have had longer periods of English instruction regularly score higher on both sections of the test. Subsequent studies have confirmed that SLEP also differentiates between native and nonnative speakers. Average scores of both groups at different grade levels are shown in the SLEP *Test Manual*.

The reliability of SLEP has been determined using the Kuder-Richardson formula (20). Reliability coefficients have been computed as .94 for the first section, .93 for the second, and .96 for the total test.

Administering SLEP

The SLEP test can be administered in its entirety or in two separate sessions, to individuals or to groups. The time required for the entire test is approximately 85 minutes (just under 40 minutes for Section 1 and 45 minutes for Section 2). This includes time for students to do the practice questions that are provided for every type of question. For both sections of the test the students use a test book and mark their answers on a separate answer sheet. Answers indicated by the examinee on the cover sheet of the three-ply set are automatically registered on the second and third sheets (also see description of the new three-ply answer sheet below).

Materials Provided by the SLEP Program

The SLEP test is scored by the administering institution, which retains the test materials; ETS does not offer a scoring service. A separate basic test material package is available for Form 1, Form 2, and Form 3. Each package contains 20 test books, 100 answer sheets, 1 SLEP *Test Manual* with instructions for administering the test and interpreting the results, and 1 cassette recording of the listening comprehension questions (institutions must provide their own recorders).

The answer sheets included in the basic test materials package are printed in three-ply sets. The first ply provides the four-choice answer response ovals to be used by the examinees to mark their answer choices. The second and third plies contain only the ovals for the correct responses. The three copies allow for multiple records of an examinee's performance; for example, one copy of the

answer sheet may be kept by the teacher, one by the guidance counselor, and one in the student's permanent records.

After administering the test, the teacher removes the first ply of the answer sheet set. The answer indicated by an examinee on the first ply automatically registers on the second and third plies. Thus, the teacher can simply count the number of marks that coincide with the preprinted correct response pattern to determine the examinee's raw score.

Each of the items in the basic package can also be ordered separately. See page 17 for price information.

Confidentiality of Scores

Scores obtained by persons taking the Secondary Level English Proficiency test should be released by the institution administering the test only with the informed consent of the individuals. Under federal privacy legislation, institutions must maintain the confidentiality of data, such as test scores, about an individual and must restrict access to such data to authorized individuals. Summary data or combined data for groups of examinees should be released with discretion and only for the purpose intended.

Parallel Forms

Currently, three forms of SLEP (Form 1, Form 2, and Form 3) are available. They were all constructed from the same pool of pretested questions according to written specifications; thus, the forms are parallel in format and content. In addition, raw scores on each form have been statistically equated and placed on a common scale. This procedure compensates for inevitable differences in difficulty from form to form and ensures that scores are comparable across alternate forms of the test. SLEP is the only secondary school level test of English for nonnative speakers available throughout North America that provides for the equating of scores to a common scale. The availability of alternate forms makes SLEP particularly suitable for use as both a placement test and exit test as well as for program evaluation purposes.

Ordering Information

Each order for SLEP testing materials must be submitted on a SLEP Order Form (included with this brochure) and sent to the address on the reverse side of the form. It must be received at ETS at least four weeks before the requested delivery date.

To ensure prompt and accurate filling and delivery of orders, all information requested on the order form must be provided. An incomplete or unsigned order form will not be processed and will be returned to the sender.

Fees, Return Policy

The prices in this announcement (see price list on page 17) are current as of July 1990; they are subject to change without notice.

To order SLEP materials, an official purchase order, or a check in the amount of the total order, must accompany the SLEP Order Form. Checks should be made payable to Educational Testing Service/SLEP Program. If a purchase order is submitted, the purchase order number must be entered on the SLEP Order Form.

ETS will pay shipping charges for shipments sent to the United States, Mexico, and APO and FPO addresses, if the orders are received within four weeks of the requested delivery dates. Extraordinary shipping charges necessary to meet requested delivery dates for orders received later will be billed to the institutions. A 20 percent surcharge to cover handling and shipping costs will be added to all shipments sent to overseas addresses.

There will be no refund of fees paid for SLEP materials that are returned to ETS. However, if an item is found to be defective upon receipt, it should be returned with a letter describing the defect. The defective item will be replaced free of charge.

Important Note: Educational Testing Service adheres to the American Psychological Association Ethical Code, which restricts the release of tests and other diagnostic aids to approved institutions and agencies.

The SLEP test is designed primarily for use by accredited secondary education institutions. However, the SLEP program office will approve purchase and use of the testing materials by postsecondary institutions, training agencies, educational consultants, and others engaged in legitimate testing activities. ETS reserves the right to accept or reject orders for SLEP testing materials in whole or in part.

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Sample SLEP Questions

Section 1

The first section of the SLEP test measures ability to understand spoken English and is 35-40 minutes long. It is divided into four parts, with four different types of questions.

Part A

For the first type of question, the student must match one of four recorded sentences with a picture in the test book. The sentences are spoken only once and are not printed in the test book. This part contains items dealing with correct recognition of minimal pair contrasts, juncture, stress, sound clusters, tense, voice, prepositions, and vocabulary.

Sample Questions

Note: Pictures are for illustrative purposes only. Actual pictures and drawings in the test booklet are two to four times larger than sample pictures in this brochure.

1. **On tape:**
   Look at the picture marked 1.

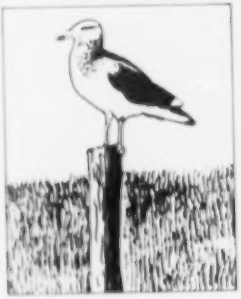
   On tape:
   (A) *There is an arrow in the sky.*
   (B) *The building has a tall tower.*
   (C) *The judge is bowing his head.*
   (D) *There is a toy in front of the building.*

1.

2. **On tape:**
   Look at the picture marked 2.

   On tape:
   (A) *The bird is standing on top of the pole.*
   (B) *The bird is flying over the fence.*
   (C) *The bird is digging in the sand.*
   (D) *The bird is eating the grass.*

2.



3. **On tape:**
   Look at the picture marked 3.

   On tape:
   (A) *There's a statue of a lion.*
   (B) *The line is very straight.*
   (C) *The wine is near the window.*
   (D) *There's a lane near the building.*

3.

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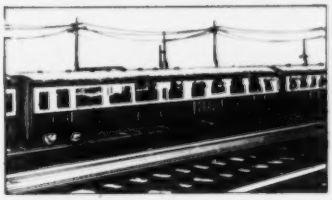
4. **On tape:**
Look at the picture marked 4.

On tape:

(A) *The brain is protected by bone.*
(B) *The train is on the track.*
(C) *The drain is stopped up.*
(D) *The rain is coming down.*

4.



Part B

These questions approximate the type of dictation exercises used frequently in English language classes: the student must match a sentence printed in the test book with a sentence heard on the tape. The questions focus on the relationship between structure and meaning.

Sample Questions

1. **On tape:** *The class can finish it in less than an hour.*

In test book: (A) The classes can't finish in half an hour.
(B) The class won't be finished for an hour.
(C) The classes will take at least an hour.
(D) The class can finish it in less than an hour.

2. **On tape:** *Why aren't they fixing the car?*

In test book: (A) Are they fixing the car?
(B) I'm fixing the car.
(C) Why aren't they fixing the car?
(D) The car has been fixed.

3. **On tape:** *While I was waiting for my sister, she got the news.*

In test book: (A) While I was waiting for my sister, she got the news.
(B) While my sister was waiting for me, she got the news.
(C) I was waiting for my sister to get the news.
(D) I was waiting for my sister when I got the news.

4. **On tape:** *He didn't know how to get to the gym.*

In test book: (A) He didn't go to the gym.
(B) He explained how to use the gym.
(C) He told us to get to the gym.
(D) He didn't know how to get to the gym.

5. **On tape:** *Bill has one brother and one sister, and so does Jane.*

In test book: (A) Bill has one brother and one sister, and so does Jane.
(B) Bill has one brother and a sister named Jane.
(C) Bill and Jane are brother and sister.
(D) Bill's brother and sister like to be with Jane.

Part C

For the second type of question, the student refers to a map in the test book (see page 11). Streets and buildings on the map are labeled, and there are four cars, marked A, B, C, and D. The student must choose the one car that is the source of a brief conversation on the recording. The questions in this part assess a variety of linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic concepts. These include directions, recognition of building names and associated vocabulary, distance, and time.

Sample Questions

1. **On tape:**

(man) *The museum has a special exhibit this week. Why don't we go?*

(woman) *I'd like to very much. If we continue on Mackerel to the circle and go around to Salmon, we can park on Cod Lane.*

(third voice) *Which car are the people in?*

2. **On tape:**

(man) *I would like to find the way to the circle. From there, I know how to get home.*

(woman) *It's not too hard. If we bear right into Bass and then go south on Salmon, we will end up at the circle.*

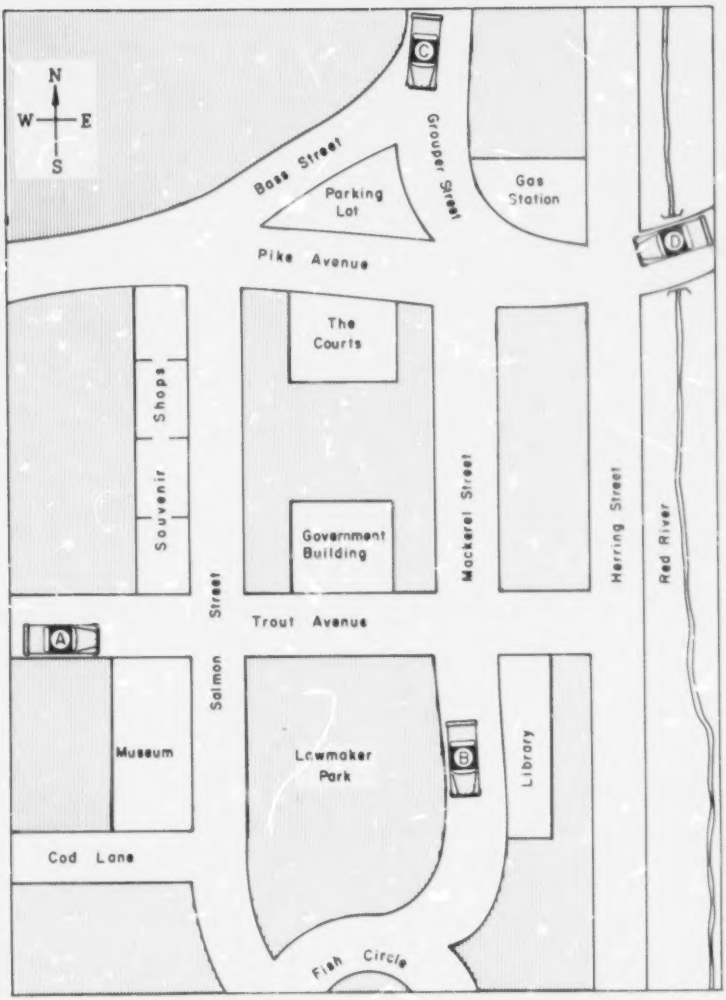
(third voice) *Which car are the people in?*

3. **On tape:**

(woman) *The judges are going to hear a very interesting case today. Let's stop at the courts.*

(man) *That's a good idea. I'll go north at the next intersection and cross Pike Avenue. We can park in the lot across the street from the courts.*

(third voice) *Which car are the people in?*



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Part D

The questions in this part are based on conversations, recorded by American high school students, that represent typical secondary school situations. The conversations take place in various parts of a school and deal with events that typically occur in each location. Conversations also deal with extracurricular activities, academic subjects, school closings, and holidays. For each recorded question, the student must choose one of four answers printed in the test book.

Sample Questions

1. **On tape:**

(Bob) *I heard that it is supposed to be a very good band. Since the game starts at 7:30, Nancy, I'll pick you up at 7.*

(Nancy) *That's fine. I'll be ready. It takes 15 minutes to get to the gym, so we'll have time.*

(third voice) *At what time will they arrive at the gym?*

In test book: (A) 6:45.
(B) 7:00.
(C) 7:15.
(D) 7:30.

For questions 2 and 3:

2. **On tape:**

(Nancy) *Jane, what are you going to wear to the game?*

(Jane) *I'm not sure yet. I don't want to have a heavy sweater on at the dance. It'll be pretty warm in the gym. I'll probably wear a light dress, even though the weather outside might not be so warm.*

(third voice) *What is the girl going to wear?*

In test book: (A) A heavy sweater.
(B) A heavy coat.
(C) Some light slacks.
(D) A light dress.

3. **On tape:** *What is the girl's reason for this decision?*

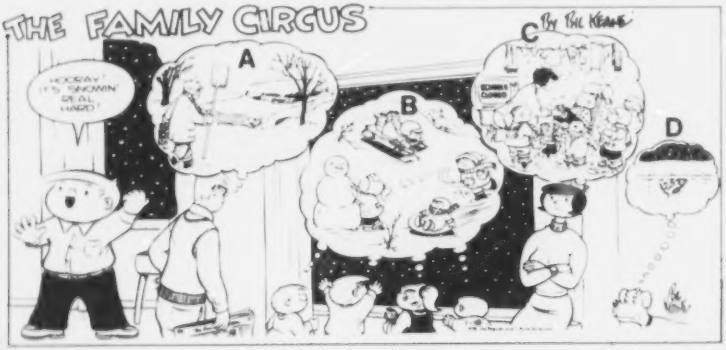
In test book: (A) She expects it to be cold outside.
(B) She expects it to be warm inside.
(C) It is going to snow.
(D) It will be very windy.

Section 2

The second section of the test is 40 minutes long and measures ability to understand written English. The questions cover grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. There are three parts to Section 2.

Part A

For each question in this part, the student must match the reaction of one of four characters in a cartoon with a printed sentence.



Sample Questions

1. All those wet clothes. The children will want to stay outside and I'll spend my time trying to keep them dry.

2. I can hardly wait to make the first snowball. I've been waiting all year to get back at her.

3. Oh, my aching back. The car will be covered and I'll have to shovel it out.

4. Isn't it great that school might be closed? I'd much rather have fun outside than stay in school. What better way to spend a snowy day.

5. I'm going to be awfully hungry. I shouldn't have hidden that bone. It would have been better to leave it in the house.

Part B

For the questions in this part, the student must match a printed sentence with one of four drawings. The particular focus of this item type is the use of prepositions, pronouns, adverbs, and numbers.

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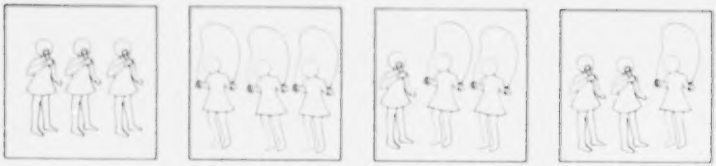
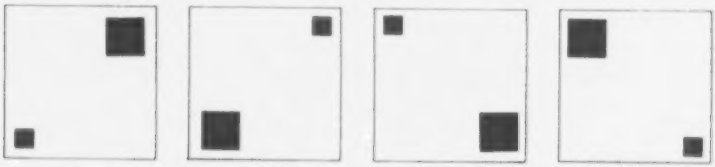
Sample Questions

1. One girl is eating ice cream but two aren't.



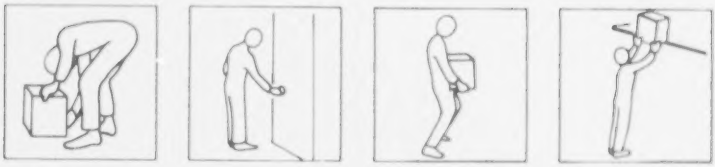
A B C D

2. The small square is in the upper left corner.



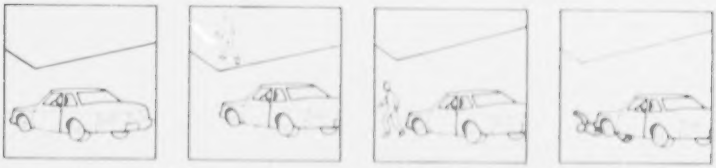
A B C D

3. He is bending over to pick up the box.



A B C D

4. The car almost hit him while he was crossing the street.



A B C D

Part C

This part of Section 2 contains questions of two types. In one, the student must complete passages by selecting the appropriate words or phrases from among four choices printed at intervals in the passages.

Sample Passage and Questions

1. Sound is something we (A) hears. (B) hearing. (C) heard. (D) hear. It comes to your

2. (A) eyes (B) nose (C) ears (D) mouth in different ways. It might be pleasant,

3. like the voice of a friend, (A) when (B) as (C) or (D) since unpleasant, like the screech

4. of a train's wheels on a railroad (A) station. (B) track. (C) light. (D) conductor. Some sounds are loud,

5. and some are soft, some are high, and some are (A) full. (B) low. (C) quiet. (D) big. Sound is

6. very (A) importance (B) importantly (C) important (D) import to us because it is the basic means of communication.

In the second type of question, the student must answer questions about the passage for which he or she supplied the missing words or phrases.

Sample Questions

7. What does screech in line 3 mean?

(A) noise (B) motion (C) place (D) piece

8. Which of the phrases below is another example of a pleasant sound, similar to the phrase in the sentence that begins in line 2, "like the voice of a friend"?

(A) Like the ring of an alarm (B) Like the wail of a siren
(C) Like the honk of a horn (D) Like the song of a bird

9. Which sentence below has almost the same meaning as the sentence that begins in line 5?

(A) It is meaningful to communicate with sound.
(B) The main way we communicate is with sound.
(C) The meaning of sound is basic to communication.
(D) In order to communicate, we need basic sounds.

Part D

In this part of Section 2, the student must read a short literary passage and answer questions about it.

Sample Passage and Questions

The footsteps began about a quarter past one o'clock in the morning, a rhythmic, quick-cadenced walking around the dining room table. My mother was asleep in one room upstairs, my brother Herman in another; grandfather was in the attic, in the old walnut bed. I had just stepped out of the bathtub and was busily rubbing myself with a towel when I heard the steps. They were the steps of a man walking rapidly around the dining room table downstairs.

1. What did the writer hear?

(A) A soldier marching (B) His brother snoring
(C) His mother talking (D) A person walking

2. Where did the sounds come from?

(A) The attic (B) The dining room
(C) The bathroom (D) The stairs

3. What was most of the family doing?

(A) Listening (B) Working (C) Bathing (D) Sleeping

4. What was the writer doing?

(A) Talking to himself (B) Drying himself
(C) Brushing his hair (D) Getting dressed

5. The bed in the attic was made of which of the following materials?

   (A) Metal (B) Wood (C) Feathers (D) Straw

6. What time did the sounds begin?

   (A) 12:45 p.m. (B) 1:00 a.m. (C) 1:15 a.m. (D) 1:30 p.m.

Price List

Three forms of the SLEP basic test material package are available for US$110 each. Under this program, the administering institution scores the tests and retains the test materials; ETS does not provide a scoring service. In addition to the three SLEP basic test material packages, materials for each form may be ordered individually.

Basic Test Material Package ..... US$110

Materials included in package:
- 20 test books
- 100 three-ply answer sheets
- 1 cassette recording
- 1 SLEP *Test Manual*

Individual Test Materials

Test books (available in packs of 10 only)

1 pack	US$40/pack
2 or more packs	US$35/pack

Three-ply answer sheets (available in packs of 100 only)

1 pack	US$40/pack
2 or more packs	US$35/pack
Cassettes	US$6 each
SLEP *Test Manual*	US$6 each

How to Order

Each order for SLEP testing materials must be submitted on a SLEP order form (on page 19) or on the organization's purchase order signed by an authorized purchasing agent or school official. Orders must be accompanied by signed purchase orders or payment.

To ensure prompt and accurate filling and delivery of orders, all information requested on the order form must be provided. An incomplete or unsigned order will not be processed and may be returned to the sender.

Mail the completed order form or purchase order to:

Secondary Level English Proficiency Test
Order Service Section, L02
P.O. Box 6158
Princeton, NJ 08541-6158
USA

There is no charge for normal shipping within the United States and Mexico and to APO and FPO addresses. Allow four weeks for processing the order and delivery of test materials. Extraordinary delivery charges to meet a requested deadline will be billed to the institution placing the order.

There is a 20 percent shipping and handling surcharge for all overseas shipments. Please add the shipping and handling fee when prepaying the order.

Orders will be shipped within two weeks after the order form is received by the Order Service Section, at Educational Testing Service.

Orders from institutions outside the United States must be prepaid. (Include the shipping and handling surcharge.) Payment must be made in US dollars by a bank check drawn on a bank in the United States or an international money order made payable to the SLEP Program. Do not send cash.

Answer Key for Sample Questions

SECTION 1	Part A	Part B	Part C	Part D
	1. B	1. D	1. B	1. C
	2. A	2. C	2. C	2. D
	3. A	3. A	3. A	3. B
	4. B	4. D		
		5. A		
SECTION 2	Part A	Part B	Part C	Part D
	1. C	1. C	1. D	1. D
	2. B	2. C	2. C	2. B
	3. A	3. A	3. C	3. D
	4. B	4. C	4. B	4. B
	5. D		5. B	5. B
			6. C	6. C
			7. A	
			8. D	
			9. B	

SLEP® ORDER FORM

633-04

Date _____ Required Delivery Date _____

Bill to:

_____
School

_____
Attention

_____
Street

_____
City State Zip Code Postal Code

Telephone No. _____

Ship to:

_____
School District

_____
Attention

_____
Street

_____
City State Zip Code Postal Code

Code Number	Unit of Issue	Test Form 1	Quantity	Unit Price See page 17.	Total Price
299314	each	Basic Test Material Package			
299315	pack	Test Books (Pack of 10)			
299327	pack	Three-ply Answer Sheets (Pack of 100)			
299317	each	Cassette for Listening Comprehension			
299335	each	SLEP *Test Manual*			
Code Number	**Unit of Issue**	**Test Form 2**	**Quantity**	**Unit Price See page 17.**	
299319	each	Basic Test Material Package			
299320	pack	Test Books (Pack of 10)			
299328	pack	Three-ply Answer Sheets (Pack of 100)			
299322	each	Cassette for Listening Comprehension			
299335	each	SLEP *Test Manual*			
Code Number	**Unit of Issue**	**Test Form 3**	**Quantity**	**Unit Price See page 17.**	
299331	each	Basic Test Material Package			
681000	pack	Test Books (Pack of 10)			
299332	pack	Three-ply Answer Sheets (Pack of 100)			
299333	each	Cassette for Listening Comprehension			
299335	each	SLEP *Test Manual*			

Subtotal ▶

Shipping & handling surcharge, overseas orders: add 20 percent ▶

Total Order ▶

_____ Check enclosed

_____ Authorized purchase order attached

Purchase order number _____

Note: Extraordinary shipping charges to meet requested deadline dates will be billed.

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PLEDGE OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND AGREEMENT

We agree to adhere to standard procedures for:

1. administering the test as described in the SLEP *Test Manual*, and
2. protecting the security of the test.

Signature of official placing this order

Title

( )
Telephone number

Date

The American Psychological Association (APA), in its publication *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*, describes the serious responsibilities of test users in applying standards in test situations:

"Although the test developer and publisher should provide information on the strengths and weaknesses of the test, the ultimate responsibility for test use lies with the test user."

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